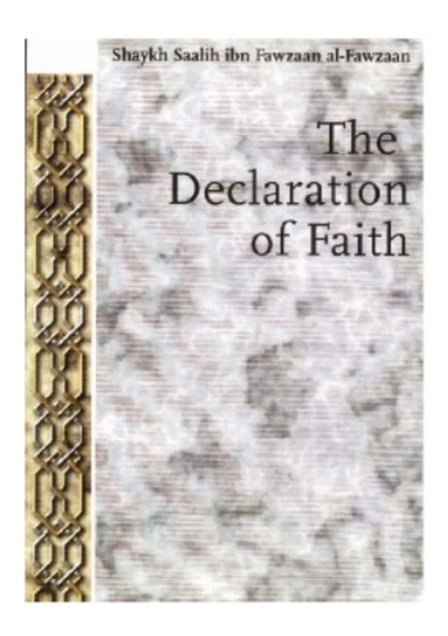
Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem



The Declaration of Faith

By Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

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Published and Distributed by
Message of Islam, P.O.Box 181, Hounslow, Middlesex TW 59 YX United Kingdom.

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TRANSLATOR' S PREFACE

Indeed all praise belongs to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evil [whisperings] to our souls and from our evil actions. Whosoever Allaah guides, none can misguide, but whosoever He leaves to stray, none can guide that person aright. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah alone, without any partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* is His Slave and Messenger.

To continue:
Allaah the Exalted said: **"So have knowledge of la ilaaha illallaah; that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah; and ask forgiveness for your sins and for the sins of the believing men and women."** [Soorah Muhammad 47:19]

This is, by Allaah's Grace, a translation of the Arabic book: Laa illaaha illallaah; its Meaning, its Requirements and its Effects Upon the Individual and the Society, by the esteemed scholar, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan - may Allaah protect him and continue benefiting the ummah with him. Although a translation of this book appeared a decade ago, it was, however, in need of a number of corrections and improvements [1]. Rather than revising the existing translation, it was decided that these corrections were best dealt with by undertaking a complete re-

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[1] It was published by Imaam Muhammad ibn Sa'ud University; Saudi Arabia - by the Department of Culture and Publications - under the title: The Meaning of: There is no Divine but Allaah; 1409H / 1989CE. The
translators were Dr. Yusuf Omar Babakr and Muhammad Muhammad Khamis; may Allaah reward them for their work and efforts.

translation; the result of which is now in the hands of the noble reader.

Furthermore, there were points in the text of the book for which it was felt that a further explanation would be useful to the English speaking reader and in some cases, perhaps even essential. Therefore, some explanatory notes have been supplied in footnote form - most of which have been taken from other writings and publications of the Shaykh himself - hoping that such notes may aid in enhancing the reader's understanding and appreciation of this vital topic. Indeed, knowledge concerning laa ilaaha illaalaah is the most fundamental issue of Islaam and thus it is the most important and most excellent type of knowledge, since: "The excellence [of a particular type] of knowledge, depends upon what it is connected with. [2]" Also, the sources for the ahaadeeth [3] have been referenced, along with a brief comment upon their degrees of authenticity, as have the statements and narrations from the scholars quoted in the text of this book.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to those who aided in the translation and publication of this book, in particular to Dr. 'Abdullaah al-Farsee; whose revision of the translation and suggestions for its clarity and improvement were very useful. Indeed, the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said: "He who does not thank the people, does not thank Allaah." [4]

Finally, I ask Allaah by His beautiful Names that He accepts this humble endeavor and that He causes the book to be of benefit

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[2] Sharhul-Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah (1/5) of Imaam lbn Abil-'Izz.
[3] Written records or narratives of what the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* did, said or tacitly approved of. The singular of ahaadeeth is: hadeeth.
[4] Saheeh: Reported by at-Tirmidhee in his Sunan (no.2021), from Abu Sa'eed *radhiyallahu anhu*. it was declared to be authentic (saheeh) by Shaykh al-Albaanee in as-Saheehah (no.416).

to Islaam and the Muslims. And all praise be to Allaah, Lord of the universe; and may He extol and send the blessings of peace upon our master and leader, Muhammad; and upon his Family, his Companions and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Resurrection.

ABU ‘AALIYAH SURKHEEL IBN ANWAR SHARIF
21st day of Rabee’uth-Thaanee 1419H
(15th of August 1998CE)
London, England

INTRODUCTION

Indeed all praise is for Allaah. We praise Him; seek His aid and assistance; and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evil [whisperings] to our souls and from our own evil actions. Whosoever Allaah guides, none can misguide; but whosoever Allaah leaves to stray, none can guide aright. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah alone, Who has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, is His Slave and Messenger.

To proceed:
Allaah, the Most Perfect, commanded us to celebrate His remembrance. He praised those who remember Him and promised them a tremendous reward. He commanded us to remember Him in general, and more particularly, after completing the various prescribed acts of worship. Allaah the Exalted said:

"When you have finished the Prayer, then remember Allaah; standing, sitting or lying down on your sides."
[Soorah an-Nisaa 4:103]

And Allaah said: **"When you have completed your Pilgrimage rites, then remember Allaah as you remember your forefathers, or with far greater remembrance."**
[Soorah al-Baqarah 2:200]

Allaah ordered that His remembrance be celebrated, particularly during the performance of the Pilgrimage (hajj) itself. About this Allaah the Most High said: **"Then when you leave 'Arafaat, remember Allaah at the Sacred-Site."**
[Soorah al-Baqarah 2:198]

Allaah the Exalted also said: **"And remember the Name of Allaah during the appointed days over the beasts of cattle that He has provided them for their sacrifice."**

[Soorah al-Hajj 22:28]

Allaah the Exalted also said: **"And remember Allaah during the appointed days."**

[Soorah al-Baqarah 2:203]

Allaah ordered the establishment of Prayer (salaah) in order to celebrate His remembrance, as He said: **"And establish the Prayer for My remembrance."**

[Soorah Taa Haa 20:14]

The Prophet sallallaahu 'ala yhi wa sallam said**: "The days of at-tashreeq are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allaah.**"[5]

Allaah the Exalted said: **"0 you who believe! Remember Allaah in abundance and glorify His praises, morning and evening."**

[Soorah al-Ahzaab 33:41-42]

The best remembrance (dhikr) is: None has the right to be worshiped, except Allaah, alone, having no partner; as is related from the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* who said: "The best supplication is the supplication on the day of 'Arafah; and the best that I, or any other Prophet sent before me, have said is: None has the right to be worshiped except Allaah,

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[5] Reported by Muslim in his Saheeh (no.1141) from Nubayshah al-Hudhalee *radhiyallahu anhu*.
Imaam an-Nawawee said in Sharh Saheeh Muslim [8/15]: "The days of at-tashreeq are the three days following the day of [the 'Eed] Sacrifice."

alone, having no partner, to Him belongs the sovereignty and to Him belongs all praise and He has power over everything." [6]

Therefore, since this great declaration (kalimah) of laa ilaaha illallaah stands out amongst the various types of remembrance and because it is not merely something that is uttered by the tongue - rather it has certain rulings, conditions, meanings and requirements attached to it - I decided to choose this kalimah as the subject of my discussion. I hope that Allaah the Exalted makes us all from amongst those people who cling firmly to it; recognize its true meaning; and act in accordance with its requirements, both inwardly and outwardly.

My discussion concerning the kalimah will be confined to the following points:

- its status in the life of a Muslim
- its virtues and excellence
- its lexical analysis
- its pillars
- its conditions
- its meaning and requirements
- when it benefits the one who says it and when it does not
- its effects

So I say, whilst seeking the help of Allaah the Exalted:

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[6] Hasan: Reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.3585). It was declared to be sound (hasan) by the hadeeth master (haafidh), Zaynud-Deen al-'Iraaqee, in Takhreejul-Ihyaa (1/254-255).

THE STATUS OF
The Declaration of Faith

It is a declaration (kalimah) that the Muslims proclaim in their daily lives; in their call to Prayer (adhaan), their call to establishing the Prayer (‘iqaamah), their sermons and their speeches. It is: "A declaration upon which the heavens and the earth are established, and for which the whole of the creation was created, and for which Allaah sent Messengers, revealed Books, and prescribed Divine Laws. Because of it the Scales and the Registers were set-up, as were Paradise and Hellfire. Due to it creation was divided into Believers and unbelievers; righteous and wicked. It is the root cause for [there being] creation, command, rewards and punishments. It is the right for which the creation was created and about it and its rights will they be questioned and brought to account. Because of it there is punishment and reward; due to it the direction of Prayer (qiblah) was set-up; upon it rests the very foundation of the Religion; and because of it swords are drawn for striving and fighting (jihaad). It is the Right of Allaah over His slaves; the Declaration (kalimah) of Islaam; and the key to Paradise; about it both the earlier and later people will be questioned. Indeed, no person will stand before Allaah without being asked two questions: What did you worship? And how did you respond to the Messengers? The reply to the first is by realization of laa ilaaha illallaah; knowing it, affirming it, and acting by it. The reply to the second is by realization that Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* is the Messenger of Allaah; knowing it, complying with it, and being obedient to it." [7]. [8]

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[7] Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (hafidhahullaah) said in Sharhul-Aqeedatil Waasitiyyah (p.8): "Bearing witness that he is the Messenger of Allaah requires having faith (eemaan) in him; obeying him in what he commanded; keeping away from what he prohibited; believing in whatever he informed; and following him in what is prescribed as Law."

[8] Zaadul-Ma'aad (1/34) of Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim.

This kalimah is the dividing line between unbelief (kufr) and Islaam. It is the word of piety (kalimatut-taqwaa), the firm and trustworthy hand-hold (al-'urwatul-wuthqaa) and it is what Ibraaheem *alaihis-salaam* made as:

"A Word to endure amongst his offspring, that they may turn to Allaah in repentance and obedience."

[Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:28]

It is [a kalimah] that Allaah Himself has testified to, as have the angels and those who possess knowledge from amongst His creation. Allaah the Most High said:

"Allaah bears witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Him; as do the angels and those who possess knowledge. He maintains His creation upon justice. None has the right to be worshiped except Him, the All-Mighty, All-Wise."

[Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:18]

It is the word of purity and sincerity (kalimatul-ikhlaas), a witness and an invitation to the truth, a declaration of dissociation from shirk [9] and it is the reason why the creation was created; as Allaah the Exalted said:

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[9] The Shaykh, hafidhahullah, said in Kitaabut-Tawheed (p.9): "Shirk is to set-up partners with Allaah the Exalted in those matters concerning His Lordship (ruboobiyyah), or His Divinity and Worship (uloohiyyah). The predominant form of shirk occurs in matters of His Divinity and Worship; such as supplicating to other than Allaah or directing any form of worship, such as slaughtering, vowing, or [reverential] love, fear and hope, to others besides Allaah - and shirk is the greatest of all sins."

Imaam as-Sa'dee, rahimahtdlaah, has given a comprehensive definition of shirk in al-Qawlus-Sadeed (p.48):

"I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me."

[Soorah adh-Dhaariyaat 51:56]

Because of it Messengers were sent and Divine Books and Scriptures were revealed, as Allaah said: **"We did not send any Messenger before you, except that We revealed to him that none has the right to be worshiped except Me; so worship Me."**

[Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:25]

Allaah the Exalted also said: **"He sends down the angels with the revelation of His commands to whosoever of His slaves that He wills, saying: Warn mankind that none has the right to be worshiped except Me. So fear Me [by keeping away from sin and disobedience]."**

[Soorah an-Nahl 16:2]

Ibn 'Uyaynah, (*radhiyallahu anhu*) said: **"Allaah has not bestowed any favour upon His slaves greater than the favour of them realising laa ilaaha ilallaah. Indeed laa**

"The definition of the greater shirk and its explanation that encompasses all its types and elements is: The servant directing any form or part of worship to other than Allaah. So every belief, statement or action which has been confirmed as being prescribed by the sharee'ah, then directing it solely to Allaah is tawheed, faith (eemaan) and sincerity (ikhlaas); whereas directing it to other than Allaah is shirk and unbelief (kufr). So adhere to this guideline concerning the greater shirk, [a guideline] which entails no exception at all. Likewise, the definition of the lesser shirk is: Every intent, statement or action that does not reach the level of worship, but is a means or an avenue leading to the greater shirk."

ilaaha illallaah is to the people of Paradise, what cool water is to the people of this world." [10]

Whoever utters it will have his wealth and his blood safeguarded, but whoever refuses to do so, then his property and his blood are not safeguarded. It has been reported in [one of] the Saheeh collections that the *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said: "**Whoever says: laa ilaaha illallaah and rejects whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah, then his property and blood become sacred and his reckoning is with Allaah."** [11]

It is the first thing sought from the unbelievers when they are invited to embrace Islaam, since as the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* was sending Mu'aadh to Yemen, he said to him: **"You are going to a people from the people of the Book. So let the first thing to which you call them be the worship of Allaah."** [12]

So with this you have come to know about the place of laa ilaaha illallaah in the Religion, its importance in the life of a

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[10] Related by Ibn Rajab in Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (p.53)

[11] Reported by Muslim (no.37)

[12] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.1458) and Muslim (no.31). In the narration of Muslim (no.2 9) there occurs the wording: "So call them to testify to laa ilaaha illallaah ..."

Imaam Ibn al-Mundhir, (rahimahullaah) said in al-Awsat (p.73 5): "There is a consensus from all those whose views have been preserved from the people of knowledge, that when an unbeliever who has reached the age of puberty and is sound of mind, testifies to laa ilaaha illallaah; and to the fact that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger; and that everything Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* came with is the truth and frees himself from every religion which contradicts the Religion of Islaam - then he is a Muslim."

Muslim and that it is the very first obligation upon the people, since it is the foundation upon which all actions are based. [13]

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[13] As for the view that the first obligation upon each person is to know Allaah through rational proofs and contemplation - a view which has regrettably gained currency amongst a party of the present-day callers to Islaam - then this is indeed an error!

Imaam Ibn Abil-'Izz, rahimahullaah, spoke about this in Sharhul Aqeeclatit -Tahaawiyyah (1/23): "What is correct is that the first obligation upon the one who is morally responsible (mukallaf) is to testify to laa ilaaha illallaah. It is not to rationally contemplate, nor intend to contemplate, nor to doubt - which are the views of the leaders of blameworthy and innovated speech (al-kalaamul-madhmoom). Rather, the scholars of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) were all in agreement that the first obligation a person is ordered with are the two testifications of faith (shahaadatain)."

Imaam an-Nawawee, rahimahullaah, stated the likes of the above in Sharh Saheeh Muslim (1/187) saying: "In this is an evident proof for the view of the verifying scholars, as well as the majority of the Salaf and the later scholars (khalaf), that when a person binds himself to the Religion of Islaam - with a decisive belief, having no doubt about it - then this suffices him. He is a Believer from the people of tawheed. It is not obligatory for him to learn the proofs of the rationalists (almutakallimoon) or to know Allaah the Exalted by them. This is contrary to those who obligate this and make it a condition for him to be from the people of the Qiblah [i.e. Muslims], claiming that the ruling of someone being a Muslim could not be applied except by this. **This view, which is the saying of many of the Mu'tazilah and some of our colleagues from the people of kalaam, is a clear error,** since what is required is a firm and decisive trust which has already been attained; and since the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* declared trust in what he came with to be sufficient and he did not make knowing such [rational] proofs a condition."

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said in Dar'ut-Ta'aarudil-Aql wan-Naql (8/21): "A group held that knowing Allaah through rational contemplation was obligatory, there being no way to reach this except through it; so they obligated rational contemplation upon everyone. This view was spread in the ummah by the Mu'tazilah and their ilk."

Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalaanee, rahimahullaah, also rebutted this erroneous view in Fathul-Baaree (13/437) saying: "His words are supported by what Aboo Daawood reports from Ibn 'Abbaas: "That a man said to Allah's Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*: Did Allaah send you so that we should testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah and that we should forsake [the deities] al-Laat and al-'Uzzaa? He replied: "Yes." So the man became a Muslim." The basis of this can be found in the report of the two Saheehs in the story of Dammaam ibn Tha'labah. In the hadeeth of 'Amr ibn 'Abasa, which is reported by Muslim, 'Amr said: "I came to the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* and said: What are you? He replied: A Prophet of Allaah. I said: Did Allaah send you? He replied: Yes. I said: With what? He replied: To single out Allaah alone with worship and not to associate anything else in worship with Him. ['Amr then embraced Islaam]." ... Also there are the letters that the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* sent to Hercules, Chosroes and other kings, calling them to tawheed. These and other continuously recurring (mutawaatir) reports (which are mutawaatir in meaning) prove that when the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* called the unbelievers to have faith in Allaah and to affirm what he came with, he did not increase upon this [i.e. he did not require them to contemplate or to know rational proofs]. So whoever responded to the message, it was accepted from him, regardless of whether he contemplated or not."

Point to Note: Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Maani' said in Sharhul 'Aqeedatis- Safaareeniyyah (p.61): "Some scholars have said: Rational contemplation (nadhr) is obligatory in some situations but not in others, and upon some individuals but not upon

THE VIRTUES OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It has great virtues and has a great place with Allaah. Whoever says it with truthfulness will enter the Gardens of Paradise and whoever did not utter it truthfully, his property and blood will be safeguarded in this world, but his reckoning will be with Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. It is a concise declaration that contains few letters; light upon the tongue, yet heavy in the scales. It has been reported by Ibn Hibbaan, as well as al-Haakim who declared it to be authentic (saheeh), from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree *radhiyallahu anhu*, that Allaah's Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said: "**Moses said: 0 my Lord! Teach me something by which I can remember You and supplicate to You. Allaah said: 0 Moses! say laa ilaaha ilallaah. Moses said: 0 my Lord! All Your slaves say this. Allaah said: 0 Moses! If the seven heavens and all that they contain, other than Me, and the seven earths were placed in one scale, and laa ilaaha ilallaah were put in the other, then laa ilaaha illallaah would outweigh them all.**" [14]

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others. It is obligatory upon one whose natural instinct to submit to Allaah (fitrah) has been so corrupted that he is in need of rational contemplation. As for one who can acquire cognisence of Allaah without contemplation, nor has his fitrah been corrupted, then it is not obligatory upon him."

The likes of this was also stated by Ibn Taymiyyah in Majmoo' Fataawaa (16/328). For a detailed treatment of this topic consult: Dar'ut-Ta'aarudil- 'Aql wan-Naql (8/351-359) and Fathul-Baaree (13/432-439).

[14] Reported by Ibn Hibbaan in his Saheeh (no.2324) and al-Haakim in al-Mustadrak (1/528).

This hadeeth proves that laa ilaaha illallaah is the best form of remembrance, as also occurs in the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah ibn Umar: **"The best supplication is the supplication on the day of 'Arafah, and the best that I, or any other Prophet sent before me, have said is: None has the right to be worshiped except Allaah, alone, having no partner. To Him belongs the sovereignty, and to Him belongs all praise, and He has power over everything."** [15]

A further indication as to how weighty this kalimah is in the scales can be seen from what at-Tirmidhee reports and declares to be sound - as well as an-Nasaa'ee, and al-Haakim who said that it is authentic according to the criterion of Muslim - from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, from the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, who said: '**A person from my ummah will be summoned in front of everyone on the Day of Resurrection. Ninety-nine scrolls will be unfurled for him, each scroll extending as far as the eye can see. Then it will be said: Do you deny any of this [i.e. your bad deeds]? So the man will reply: No, 0 Lord. Then it will be said: Do you have any excuse or any good deed? The man, in a state of terror, will answer: No. It will then be said: Rather, you do have some good deeds and no**

Even though the authenticity of this hadeeth has been disputed by some scholars of hadeeth - as pointed out by Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arna'oot in his verification to Sharhus-Sunnah (5/55) of al-Baghawee - the actual virtue under discussion is mentioned in another narration reported by Ahmad (2/169), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr *radhiyallahu anhu*. This latter narration was declared to be saheeh by the leading hadeeth specialist (rnuhaddith) of our age, Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, in as-Saheehah (no.134).

[15] Hasan: Its authentication has preceded (p.12).

injustice will befall you this Day. So a parchment will be taken out for him, upon which there will be the testification of laa ilaaha illallaah and the testification that Muhammad is the Slave and Messenger of Allaah. The man will say: 0 Lord, what is this parchment in comparison to those scrolls! It will be said to him: No injustice shall befall you. The scrolls will then be placed in one of the scales and the parchment in the other; the scrolls will be light in weight, whereas the parchment will be heavy." [16]

Indeed, this tremendous kalimah has many virtues, a number of which have been mentioned by Haafidh Ibn Rajab in his essay entitled Kalimatul-Ikhlaas. These include:-

- It is the price to pay for the Gardens of Paradise (jannah) He whose last words are laa ilaaha illallaah will enter the Gardens of Paradise
- It is salvation from the Hellfire
- It necessitates being forgiven
- It is the best of all good actions
- It wipes away sins
- It renews the faith (eemaan) that is planted in the heart
- It outweighs, on the scales, the records of sins
- It traverses all barriers until it reaches Allaah the Majestic
- It is a kalimah whose sayer Allaah declares truthful
- It is the best of what the Prophets have said
- It is the best form of remembrance, the best of all actions and the one that is multiplied the most [in reward]
- It is equivalent to freeing slaves
- It is a protection against Shaytaan

[16] Saheeh: Reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.2641), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr *radhiyallahu anhu*. It was declared to be saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaanee in as-Saheehah (no.135).

- It is a means of safety from the darkness in the grave and from the terror of the gathering (al-hashr)
- It is a distinguishing sign for the Believers when they emerge from their graves
- All eight gates of Paradise will be opened to its testifier and he may enter by any one he chooses. Even if its testifier enters the Hellfire due to falling short in fulfilling [some of] its rights, most definitely, that person will eventually be taken out from it.

These were the main points that Ibn Rajab mentioned in his essay concerning the virtues of the kalimah, bringing a proof for each one of these points.[17]

[17] Consult Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (pp.54-66).

A GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

Since understanding the meaning of a statement depends upon knowing its grammatical analysis, the scholars - may Allaah have mercy upon them - have paid great attention to the grammatical analysis of laa ilaaha illallaah. So they say:

The word: laa [which means: No] is known as a particle of absolute negation. The word: ilaah is its corresponding noun, which is inflected and which carries with it an implication of an omitted syntactical term (taqdeer). In this case the taqdeer is designated as being the term: haqq (right); meaning that none has the right (or deserves) to be an ilaah. The phrase: illallaah (except Allaah) is an exception to the previous negation and is in the nominative case.

The meaning of ilaah is: That which is deified with worship. It is that which hearts love, adore and deify; hoping in it for the attainment of benefit or for the protection against harm. [18]

It is an error to think that the ellipsis (taqdeer) is the word: existence (mawjood) or object of worship (ma'bood), because [the declaration of Faith would then mean: No deity exists except Allaah, or: No deity is worshiped except Allaah]; whereas there are many things in existence that are worshiped besides Allaah; such as idols, tombs and other things. However, the only One that has the right to be worshiped is Allaah and whatever else is worshiped besides Him is futile: the worship of which is false.

This is also what the two pillars (arkaan) of laa ilaaha illallaah dictate:

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[18] Thus, the meaning of is: That none has the right to be [deified and] worshiped, except Allaah.

THE PILLARS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It has two pillars: The first pillar is the pillar of negation (nafee), whilst the second is the pillar of affirmation (ithbaat). What is meant by negation is to negate divinity and worship (ilaahiyyah) for anything except Allaah, the Most High. What is meant by affirmation is to affirm divinity and worship only for Allaah the Most Perfect; for it is He alone that is the true Deity. So whatever else is taken by the unbelievers as deities to be worshiped are in fact all false and futile:

"That is because Allaah is the true Deity to be worshiped, and whatever else they invoke besides Him is vain falsehood."

[Soorah al-Hajj 22:62]

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The significance of laa ilaaha illaltaah in affirming divinity and worship for only Allaah is far greater than just saying that Allaah is an ilaah. This is because the saying that Allaah is an ilaah does not negate divinity and worship to other than Allaah. This is different to the saying: laa ilaaha illallaah; which obligates restricting divinity and worship to only Allaah. Likewise, those who explain al-Ilaah to mean: The one who has the ability to create and originate (al-qaadir 'alaalikhtiraa') have, for sure, committed a grave error.

Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn 'Abdullaah said in his explanation to Kitaabut-Tawheed: "If it is said: The meaning of deity (ilaah) and divinity (ilaahiyyah) have been clarified, but what is the reply to those who say that the meaning of al-Ilaah is: The one who has the ability to create and originate; or other such similar expressions? Then the answer to this is from two angles: -

Firstly: That this saying is a newly-invented saying which none of the scholars, nor any of the leading linguists, have ever

advocated; rather the words of the scholars and linguists agree with what we have previously mentioned. Therefore this view is false.

Secondly: Even if this is accepted, then it is only an explanation of what is essential for a true ilaah. Indeed, it is essential that the true ilaah be a Creator who is capable of creating and originating. If this is not the case, then that is not the true ilaah, even if he is called this. It certainly does not mean that whoever realises that ilaah means the one who is capable of creating and originating, that such a person has entered into Islaam [19]. No one has ever said this, since it would imply that the Arab unbelievers would have to be considered as Muslims [20]! If some of the later scholars did intend this, then they are

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[19] The Shaykh said in Bayaan Haqeeqatut-Tawheed (p.19): "Some of them explain ilaah to mean: the One that has the ability to originate and create. So the meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah in their view is: None has the ability to originate and create, except Allaah; and this is a serious error! For whoever explains [the kalimah] to mean just this, has not affirmed anything different than what the unbelievers already affirmed. They used to affirm that none has the ability to originate, nor to create, nor to provide and sustain, nor to give life, nor to cause death, except for Allaah - just as Allaah, the Exalted, mentions about them. Yet He did not declare them to be Muslims [because of this belief]. Yes, this meaning that is mentioned, enters into the [overall] meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah. However, it is not the main implication of this kalimah."

Also consult the explanation of Soorah al-Qasas; verse 70 by Imaam at-Tabaree in his Tafseer (20/102) and Ibn Katheer in his Tafseer (3/408).

[20] The Shaykh, hafidhahullaah, explained this matter further in Mujmal 'Aqeedatus-Salafis-Saalih (pp.10-12), where he said:

"The belief that Lordship and whatever it entails belongs solely to Allaah (tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah) is engrained in the very nature

(fitrah) of man, hardly anyone amongst mankind has disputed this; to the extent that lblees - the leader of unbelief - said:

“0 my Lord, because you left me to stray.” [Soorah al-Hijr 15:39]

And he said: “By Your Might, I will surely mislead them all.” [Soorah Saad 38:82]

Thus he acknowledged that Lordship (ruboobiyyah) belongs to Allaah alone and he [even] took an oath by Allaah’s Might. The same is the case for the rest of the unbelievers who also acknowledged this; such as Aboo Jahl and Aboo Lahab and other leaders of unbelief who opposed [the Prophet]. They all acknowledged that Lordship belongs to Allaah alone - along with the fact that they were unbelievers and misguided. Allaah the Majestic said [about such unbelivers]:
“And if you ask them who created them, they would surely say: Allaah. How then are they turned away.”
[Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:87]

And Allaah the Exalted said: “Say: Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Great Throne: They will say: Allaah.”
[Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:86]

Allaah the Majestic [also] said: “Say: In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything,
Who protects all, whilst against Whom there is no protector, if you do know? They will say: It belongs to Allaah.”
[Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:89-90]

Allaah the Majestic [also] said: “Say: Who provides for you from the sky and the earth? Or to Whom belongs hearing and sight? And Who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And Who is the Disposer of affairs? They will say: Allaah.”
Soorah Yoonus 10:31]

So they acknowledged all of this, along with the fact that in times of difficulty and hardship they would supplicate exclusively to Allaah alone. This is because they knew that there can be no salvation from difficulty except with Allaah the Most Perfect; knowing [also] that their deities and idols had no power at all to save them from [any] destruction. Allaah the Exalted said [about them]:

"When some harm inflicts you upon the sea, those that you call upon vanish from you, except Allaah alone. But when Allaah brings you safely to dry land, you turn away from him. Indeed, man is ever ungrateful."
[Soorah al-Israa 17:67]

So whoever acknowledges [just] this type of tawheed, has not entered into Islaam nor will he be saved from the Hellfire. The unbelievers - as an example - acknowledged and affirmed tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah, yet their acknowledgement of it did not make them Muslims. Rather, Allaah [still] called them idol-worshippers (mushriks) and unbelievers (kuffaar) and the ruling upon them was that they would be consigned to the Hellfire for eternity; even with their acknowledgement of tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah!

From this can be seen the mistake of those who - because of adopting the way of the rationalists (ahlul-kalaam) in their writings concerning [Islaamic] beliefs - explain tawheed as [merely] being the affirmation that Allaah exists and that He is the sole Creator, Sustainer, etc. So we say to them: This is not the belief with which Allaah sent the Prophets, since the mushriks and the unbelievers - and indeed, even lb lees - already affirmed [the concept of] tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah."

Imaam Ibn Abil-'Izz, rahimahullaah, said in Sharhul-'Aqeedatit-Taahawiyyah (1/28-29): "The tawheed to which the Messengers called and for which the Scriptures were revealed is tawheedul-ilaahiyyah; that Allaah alone has the right to be worshiped,

mistaken, and [this view] is refuted by both textual proofs and intellectual proofs." [21]

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without ascribing any partner to Him in this; and this encompasses tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah. Indeed the Arab mushriks used to acknowledge tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah and that the Creator of the heavens and the earth was One."

Finally, Imaam at-Tabaree relates in Jaami'ul-Bayaan 'an Ta'weelilQur'aan (13/50-51) that Ibn 'Abbaas radiallaahu "anhu said: "If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will reply: Allaah. Yet along with this, they still worshiped others besides Him."

[21] Tayseerul- 'Azeezil-Hameed (pp.56-57).

CONDITIONS FOR THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It will not benefit the one who says it unless the following seven conditions are fulfilled:- [22]

Firstly: Knowledge (al-'ilm) of its meaning, what it negates and affirms. If a person says it without knowing its meaning, nor what its requirements are, then he will not benefit by it, because he has not believed in what it requires. Rather, he is like someone who speaks in a language that he does not understand.

Secondly: Certainty (al-yaqeen), which is [to have] complete surety of it and which leads to repelling any doubt or suspicion about it.

Thirdly: Exclusively worshipping Allaah (al-ikhlaas), which is contrary to shirk. This is what laa ilaaha illallaah points towards.

Fourthly: Truthfulness (as-sidq), which prevents hypocrisy (nifaaq). Indeed, the hypocrites uttered it with their tongues, but did not inwardly believe in what it signified.

Fifthly: Love (al-mahabbah) for this kalimah and having love and pleasure for whatever it necessitates. This is contrary to the [state of the] hypocrites.

Sixthly: Submissive compliance (al-inqiyaad), by fulfilling its rights - which are the obligatory actions - with sincerity to Allaah and seeking His good pleasure. This is its requirement.

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[22] Some scholars, such as Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Baaz in Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah (7/56) and Shaykh 'Abdullaah ibn Jibreen in ash-Shahaadataan (p.77), add an eighth condition: The rejection of whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah.

Seventhly: Acceptance (al-qabool), which prevents rejection. This is achieved by acting upon what Allaah has commanded and abandoning whatever He has prohibited.

Scholars have deduced these conditions from those texts of the Book and the Sunnah which are pertinent to [understanding] this great kalimah; and which explain its rights and restrictions and that it is not merely a word that a person utters.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It is clear from what has preceded, that the meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah is: None has the right to be worshipped except the One [true] Deity; which is Allaah, alone, without any partner. He alone is the One Who deserves to be worshiped.

Therefore, this great kalimah implies that whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah is not a true deity that deserves to be worshiped, rather, all such deities are false. It is for this reason that many of the commands to worship Allaah are also accompanied by a [command] to negate worship along with Him. because the worship is not correct if others are worshipped along eith Him. Allah the Most High said:
"**Worship Allah alone, and do not associate anything else as partners with Him**." [Soorah An-Nisa (4): 36]

Allah, the Most High also said: **"Whosoever disbelieves in at-taaghoot and believes in Allaah, has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allaah is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower."** [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:256][23]

Allaah the Exalted [also] said: **"We sent a Messenger to every nation ordering them to worship Allaah alone, obey Him, and make their worship purely for Him; and that they should avoid everything worshiped besides Allaah."** [Soorah an-Nahl 16:36]

The Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said: **"Whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah and rejects whatever is worshiped**

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[23] Imaam Ibn-Qayyim rahimahullah, said in I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een (1/53): "At-Taaghoot is anyone concerning whom a person exceeds the limits, whether it is with regards to someone [who is pleased to be] worshipped, obeyed, or followed."

besides Allaah, his blood and his wealth become sacred and his account is with Allaah." [24]

Every Messenger said to his people: **"0 my people! Worship Allaah alone. You have none other than Him that has the right to be a deity to be worshiped."**

[Soorah aI-A'raaf 7:59]

And there are evidences other than this.

Imaam Ibn Rajab, rahimahullaah, said: "To explain this meaning and to clarify it: When a person says laa ilaaha illallaah, it means, according to him, that none has the right to be deified and worshiped except Allaah. And al-Ilaah is the One Who is obeyed and not disobeyed; due to awe and veneration of Him, and due to love, fear, hope and reliance upon Him; as well as being the One Who is asked from and is supplicated to. And none of this is correct, except for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic." [25]

This is why when the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said to the unbelievers of the Quraysh: **Say laa ilaaha illallaah**, they retorted: **"Has he made all the deities into a single Deity to be worshiped Ii.e Allaah]. Indeed, this is something very peculiar!"**

[Soorah Saad 38:5]

They [the unbelievers] understood that this kalimah rendered false the worship of any and every deity and restricted worship to just Allaah alone, and they did not want this. So it is clear that laa ilaaha illallaah, along with its requirement, implies: That Allaah alone should be singled out with worship; and that the worship of other than Him should be abandoned. So when a person says laa ilaaha illallaah, he is proclaiming that it is

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[24] Reported by Muslim (no.37)

[25] Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (p.25).

obligatory to single out Allaah alone with worship, and he is [at the same time] denouncing the worship of other than Him; such as [the worship] of idols; [the dead in the] graves; the pious and righteous.

The falsehood of those who worship the [dead in the] graves, and the likes, can be seen in that they believe laa ilaaha illallaah merely implies the affirmation that Allaah exists, or that He is the Creator and the One Who has the ability to originate or other similar beliefs; or that it just means judgment and sovereignty (haakimiyyah) belongs solely to Allaah. They think that whoever holds such beliefs and explains laa ilaaha illallaah in this manner, then they have reached the absolute truth of tawheed - even if they do what they do as regards worshipping others along with Allaah, or believe in [directing worship to] the dead; drawing closer to them by offering sacrifices to them; making vows to them; ritually walking around and circumambulating (tawaaf] their graves and seeking Divine blessings (tabarruk) from the earth around them! These people are unaware that even the unbelieving Arabs held these beliefs, and that they acknowledged and affirmed that Allaah was the Creator Who has the ability to originate. They claimed that they worshiped others along with Him because these [other deities] would bring them closer to Allaah; they did not believe that [these deities] were the actual ones who created, or were the providers of sustenance.

So [the fact that] judgment belongs solely to Allaah (haakimiyyah) is only a part of the overall meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah, it is not the main implication of it. Thus it is not enough to judge by the Prescribed Laws of Allaah (sharee'ah) in matters concerning rights, prescribed punishments (hudood) and disputes, whilst neglecting the existence of shirk in the very worship of Allaah itself! If the meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah was as these people claimed, then there would have been no dispute between the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* and between the mushrikoon, those who worshiped

idols and others along with Allaah. Indeed, if the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* had just asked them to affirm that Allaah is the One Who has the ability to originate and create, or to affirm that Allaah exists, or if he asked them to judge in accordance with Allaah's Prescribed Laws concerning issues of blood, property and rights - whilst remaining silent about the issue of [singling out Allaah alone with] worship - then they would have hastened in responding to the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*. However, they were a people who understood the Arabic language, and therefore they clearly understood that if they were to say laa ilaaha illallaah, they would be affirming the falsity of worshipping idols and that this kalimah was not a mere phrase devoid of meaning. This is why a group of them said:

"Has he made all the deities into a single Deity to be worshiped. Indeed, this is something very peculiar!"

[Soorah Saad 38:5]

And Allaah said about them: **"When it is said to them: Say laa ilaaha illallaah, they puff themselves up with pride. And they say: Are we to abandon our deities that we worship, because of a mad poet?"**

[Soorat as-Saafaat 37:35-36]

Allaah, and that they would have to single out Allaah alone with worship, and that if they said it and continued worshipping idols then they would be contradicting themselves; so they refrained from this contradiction. However, the present-day grave-worshippers do not refrain from this hideous contradiction. They say laa ilaaha iilallaah yet they contradict it by worshipping the dead and drawing closer to their shrines by directing various acts of worship to them. So woe be to those who have less knowledge concerning the [true] meaning of laa ilaaha illallaah than even Aboo Jahl and Aboo Lahab!

In summary: Whoever utters this kalimah, knowing its meaning, acting by its inward and outward requirements, negating shirk and affirming worship for Allaah alone, having an unwavering belief in what it implies, and acting in accordance with it - then he is a true Muslim. Whoever utters it and acts upon its requirements outwardly, but without believing in what it necessitates, then he is a hypocrite (munaafiq). Whoever utters it with his tongue, but acts contrary to it with [acts of] shirk that negate the kalimah, then he is a self-contradicting mushrik [26].

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[26] The Shaykh, hafidhahullaah, further explained in al-Muntaqaa min Fataawaa (1/9-10)

"Whoever utters the testification of laa ilaaha illallaah muhammadur-rasoolallah, the ruling of him being a Muslim starts there and then and his blood is sacred. If he acts upon the requirements inwardly and outwardly, he is a true Muslim, and for him are good-tidings, both in this world and in the Hereafter. If he acts upon the requirements, but does so only outwardly, then he is judged to be a Muslim based upon his outward conduct and he is treated as a Muslim, even though inwardly he is a hypocrite (munaafiq) whose affair is left to Allaah. If he does not act upon the requirements of laa ilaaha illallaah, but satisfies himself with merely pronouncing it, or he acts in opposition to it, then the ruling of apostasy will be applied to him, and he will be treated as an apostate. If he acts upon some of its requirements without acting upon others, then it will have to be seen: If the requirements that he has left constitute apostasy, then he will be judged as an apostate; such as intentionally abandoning the Prayer, or directing any form of worship to other than Allaah. If, however, that which he has left does not constitute apostasy, then he will be considered a believer whose faith (eemaan) is deficient in proportion to what he has left; such as those who commit sins that are of a lesser degree than [the major acts of] shirk."

So it is essential to not only utter this kalimah, but to also have knowledge of its meaning, since this will be a means towards acting in accordance with its essential requirements. Allaah, the Exalted, said: "Except those who bear witness to the truth and have knowledge."

[Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:86]

Acting according to its requirements means worshipping Allaah alone and rejecting the worship of anything else besides Him; this being the greatest implication of this kalimah.

Also, from the requirements of laa ilaaha illallaah is to accept Allaah's Prescribed Laws (sharee'ah) in matters of worship, social transactions and in what is lawful and unlawful, as well as to reject all other laws besides it. Allaah the Most High said:

"Or do they have partners with Allaah who have prescribed for them a religion that Allaah has not ordained?" [Soorah ash- Shooraa 42:21]

It is therefore obligatory to accept the Prescribed Laws of Allaah in matters concerning worship, social transactions, judging between people in that which they differ regarding their personal situations and other matters, whilst [at the same time] rejecting man-made laws. What this means is to reject all the innovations and deviations that have been introduced and propagated by the devils - from amongst mankind and the jinn - in the matter of worshipping Allaah. Indeed, whoever accepts anything of this has actually committed shirk in [the matter of] obedience to Allaah, just as Allaah said in this verse:

"Or do they have partners with Allaah who have prescribed for them a religion that Allaah has not ordained?"

[Soorah ash- Shooraa 42:21]

And Allaah the Most High said: **"If you were to obey them, then indeed you would be mushriks."**

[Soorah al-An'aam 6:121]

"They take their rabbis and their priests to be lords besides Allaah."

[Soorah at-Tawbaa 9:31]

In an authentic narration the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* once recited the above verse to 'Adee ibn Haatim at-Taa'ee *radhiyallahu anhu*, said: 0 Messenger of Allaah, we do not worship them. So he replied: **"Do they not make lawful to you, that whch Allaah has made unlawful, which you then deem as lawful? And do they not make unlawful to you that which Allaah has made lawful. which you then deem as unlawful?** He said: Yes indeed. So the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said to him: "**this is worshipping them**." [27]

Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahrnaan ibn Hasan, rahimahullaah, said: "In this hadeeth is a proof that obeying the rabbis and priests in those matters which constitute disobedience to AlIaah is actually [an act of] worshipping them besides Allaah. This is one of the major [types of] shirk that Allaah does not forgive..."[28]

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[27] Hasan: Reported with this wording by al-Bayhaqee in as-Sunanul-Kubraa (10/116) and lbn Taymiyyah declared it to he hasan in Majmoo Fataawaa (7/67). It has also been reported by at Tirmidhee (no. 3094) with a slightly different wording.

[28] Fathul-Majeed (2/653).

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah, rahimahullaah, clarified this point in more detail in Majmoo' Fatawaa (7/70-71), stating:

So this is the major hype of] shirk which negates the very tawheed that 1aa ilaaha illallah points towards.

“Those that take their rabbis and priests as lords obeying them in their making lawful what Allaah has declared to be unlawful and their making lawful what Allaah has declared to be lawful, occurs in one of two ways:-

Firstly: that they know that they [i.e. the rabbis and priests] have changed the Religion of Allaah, yet follow them in this act of changing (tabdeel). They thus believe to be lawful that which Alllaah has made unlawful; and unlawful that which Allaah Ins made lawful following their leaders in this, along with knowing that they have opposed the Religion of the Messengers of Allaah. This is unbelief (kufr), which Allaah and His Messenger consider to he shirk – even if they do not actually pray or prostrate to them.

Secondly - that their belief and faith in what is [truly] lawful and unlawful is established. But if they follow them in disobedience to Allaah, then their case is just like a Muslim who commits an act of disobedience. which he believes to be an act of disobedience. The likes of such people have the same ruling as the sinful Muslims ... Also, this making unlawful what is lawful, and making lawful what is unlawful, if it occurs from a scholar whose intention is to follow the Messenger, but the truth. [in this matter] was not clear to him, but he feared Allaah as much as he was able, then Allaah will not take him to task for his mistake. Rather, lie will be rewarded for the scholarly striving (ijtihad) be undertook in obedience to his Lord. However, whosoever knows that this is a mistake, yet still follows his mistake, turning away from the saying of the Messenger, then such a person has a share of this shirk that Allaah has condemned, especially if the person is following his whims and desires in this, supporting it with his tongue and hand, along with having knowledge that this opposes the Messenger. This is shirk, the doer of which is deserving of punishment.”

Likewise, it is obligatory to reject referring judgment back to man-made laws, because it is obligatory to refer judgment back to the Book of Allaah and to abandon referring judgment to whatever opposes it from the man-made systems and laws. Allaah, the Most High, said: **"If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger."**

[Soorah an-Nisaa 4:59]

Allaah the Exalted also said: **"In whatever you differ, the judgment is for Allaah. Such is Allaah, my Lord."**

[Soorah ash-Shooraa 41:10]

Allaah, the Most Perfect, has declared that the one who does not judge by what Allaah has revealed, has committed unbelief (kufr), wrong-doing (dhulm) and sin (fisq), and faith has been negated from him. So if a person judges by other than what Allaah has revealed, deeming it permissible to do so, or deeming that it is better or more appropriate than Allaah's Judgment, then this is [the greater type of] kufr and shirk which totally negates tawheed and which completely nullifies laa ilaaha illallaah. If, however, he does not deem it permissible to do so, rather he believes that it is obligatory to judge by Allaah's Judgment, but he is overcome by desires which cause him to act contrary to it, then this is the lesser type of kufr and shirk which decreases [adherence to] laa ilaaha illallaah and its requirements, [but does not take the person outside the fold of Islaam].

Thus laa ilaaha illallaah is a complete and integral way of life. It is obligatory for the Muslims to follow this way in their [modes of] worship and in their conduct and behavior. It is not merely a word that is uttered for gaining blessings, or to be merely uttered as part of the morning and evening recommended supplications; without understanding its meaning, or acting upon its requirements, or traversing its path - as many of those

who utter it with their tongues, but oppose it in their beliefs and behavior, actually think!

From the requirements of laa ilaaha illallaah is to affirm the Names (asmaa) and Attributes (sifaat) of Allaah; those that He called and described Himself with, or those that His Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* called and described Him with. Allaah the Exalted said: **"To Allaah belong the most Beautiful Names, so call upon Him by them. And leave those who reject and twist (ilhaad) His Names, they will be requited for what they used to do."**

[Soorah al-A'raaf7:JSo]

It is stated in Fathul-Majeed: "The root meaning of ilhaad in the language of the Arabs implies: Turning away from the objective, swerving away, deviating ... All of the Names of the Lord, the Exalted, are Names and Attributes by which He acquainted His worshippers and which point towards His perfection. Ibn al-Qayyim, rahimahullaah, said: "Ilhaad [of the Divine Names and Attributes] occurs through either: a complete denial and rejection of them; rejecting them by divesting them of their true meanings; distorting them by means of figurative interpretations (ta'weelaat); or by giving the Names of Allaah to His creation, such as the deviation of the people who believe in experiencing union with Allaah (ahlul-ittihaad), for they give these Names to worldly things, whether [they] are praiseworthy or blameworthy. [29] [30]

So whoever commits ilhaad in Allaah's Names and Attributes, either by divesting them of their correct meaning (ta'teel), by figurative interpretation (ta'weel) or by out rightly rejecting them (rafd) - as has been done by the Jahmiyyah, the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'arees - have actually contravened what laa ilaaha illallaah signifies. This is because the true deity

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[29] Badaa'i'ul-Fawaa'id (1/169).
[30] Fathud-Majeed (2/742-743).

deserving of worship is He with Whom nearness is sought (yatawassalu) by calling upon Him with His Names and Attributes.

Allaah the Most High said about this: "**So call upon Him by them.**"

ISoorah aI-A'raaf 7:1801

So that which has no names, nor any attributes, then how can it be a deity? How will you call upon that deity? What will you call upon that deity with? [31]

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[31] Imaam as-Sa'dee, rahimahullah, said in al-Qawlus-Sadeed (pp. 161-163), whilst explaining the above verse: "The foundation of tawheed is affirming whatever Allaah affirmed for Himself, or whatever His Messenger affirmed for Him, as regards His beautiful Names; being aware of what they encompass as regards their majestic and beautiful meanings, worshipping Allaah by them and calling upon Him with them. So everything that the worshipper seeks from his Lord - whether regarding his worldly or religious affairs - then he seeks it by calling upon Him with an appropriate Name from amongst the beautiful Names of Allaah. So whoever calls upon Him requiring provisions and sustenance, should ask Him by His Name ar-Razzaaq (the Provider). Whoever requires mercy and forgiveness [should call upon Him with His Name] ar-Rahmaan (the Most Merciful), ar-Raheem (the Bestower of Mercy), al-Birr (the Most Kind). al-Kareem (the Most Generous), al-Afu (the Pardoner). ul-Glaafoor (the Oft-Forgiving), at-Tawwaab (the One Who accepts repentance). and their like. What is better than this is that calling upon Him by His Names and Attributes is an act of worship providing that the meanings of His beautiful Names are acquired by the hearts, such that hearts are affected by what they signify and are filled with this awareness. So, for example, the Names [signifying] greatness, pride. magnificence and dread, should fill hearts with awe of Allaah and reverence to Him. The Names [signifying] beauty, goodness, kindness, compassion and munificence should fill the heart with love of

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullah) said: "The people differed in many issues related to actions and rulings (ahkaam), but at no time did they ever differ about a single verse concerning the [Divine] Attributes. **Rather, the Companions and their Followers were agreed in affirming them and leaving them as they are; along with affirming their meanings and their reality?**[32]

Allaah, a yearning for Him, praise of Him and gratitude to Him. The Names [signifying] might, wisdom, knowledge and power should fill the heart with submissiveness to Allaah, fear of Him and humility to Him. The Names that [signify] knowledge, being informed, omnipresence, watchfulness and witnessing, should fill the heart with an awareness that Allah watches over every movement and moment of stillness, and thus makes one guard against having evil thoughts and corrupt intentions. The Names signifying self-sufficiency, richness and beneficence should fill the heart with a realization of being dependant and in great need of Him, turning to Him at all times and under all circumstances"

[32] The creed and consensus of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah regarding the Divine Attributes, has been superbly summarized by Imaam at-Tirmidhee, rahimahullah, who said I his Sunan (3/266-268):

"It has been stated by more than one person from the people of knowledge regarding this hadeeth and about the likes of it from the narrations concerning the Attributes, such as [the hadeeth] about the Lord, the Most Blessed, the Most High, descending to the lowest heaven of this world every: night, they said: Affirm the narrations concerning them; have faith (eemaan) in them, do not imagine them (laa yatawahhamu), nor ask how they are. The likes of this has been reported from Maalik ibn Anas, Sufyaan ibn 'Uyaynah and
'Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak. They said concerning these ahaadeeth: "Leave them as they are, without asking how (amirroohaa bilaa kayfj." This is the saying of the people of knowledge from Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. As for the Jahmiyyah, they reject these narrations and say that this is

This indicates that it is the greater of the two types [of verses] that have been clarified and that concern for explaining it is of the utmost importance, since it is from the completeness of understanding the two testimonies of faith, and affirming it is from the most essential part of tawheed. This is why Allaah, the Most Perfect, the Most High, as well as His Messenger have clearly and unequivocally explained it such that there can be no doubt or ambiguity about it. As for the verses related to rulings and actions, then it is mainly the elite from the people who understand their meanings. As for the verses related to the Attributes, they both the general people and the elite share in understanding them, in that they both understand the basic meaning, not that they understand their true nature or how they actually are."[33]

Ibnul-Qayyim also said: "It is known by the natural state (fitrah), by the sound intellects and by the heavenly Books,

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resemblance (tashbeeh). However, Allaah, the Most High, has mentioned in various places in His Book [His Attribute of] Hand; Hearing and Seeing, but the Jahmiyyah make a figurative interpretation (ta'wee!) of these verses and explain them in a manner other than how it is explained by the people of knowledge. They say: Allaah did not create Aadam with His Hand, rather they say: The Hand [of Allaah] actually means His Power! Ishaaq ibn Ibraaheem [ar-Raahawayyah] said: Resemblance (tashbeeh) is when someone says: "The Hand [of Allaah] is like my hand, or His Hearing is like my hearing. So if someone says this, then this is resemblance. But if someone says what Allaah says: Hand, Hearing, Seeing, and he does not ask how these [Attributes] are, nor does he say that Allaah's Hearing is like my hearing, then this is not resemblance. Rather, it just like what Allaah, the Most Blessed, the Most High, said in His Book:
"There is none like Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing." [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:11]."

[33] Mukhtasar Sawaa'iqul-Mursalah (1/15).

that whoever lacks the attributes of perfection cannot be the true Ilaah, nor the Controller of affairs, nor the Lord and Sustainer. Rather, such a being is imperfect, possessing faults and deficiencies; who will not be deserving of complete and total praise, neither in this world or the Hereafter. This is because complete and total praise in this world and the Hereafter is only for whoever possess the attributes of perfection and magnificence, which would then make him deserving of complete and total praise. Due to this, the Pious Predecessors who wrote books concerning the correct beliefs and concerning affirming the Attributes of Allaah and that He is above His creation; and concerning His Speech and Him Speaking - they called such books: Tawheed. This is because negating the Attributes, rejecting them and disbelieving in them, is actually a rejection of the Creator and a denial of Him. Indeed tawheed requires affirming Allaah's Attributes of perfection, along with negating any resemblance, defects and imperfections for Him "[34]

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[34] Madaarijus-Saalikeen (1/26).

WHEN A PERSON BENEFITS FROM

THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

We previously mentioned that saying laa ilaaha illallaah must be accompanied by understanding its meaning and acting upon its requirements. However, as there are certain texts which may be misunderstood to mean that the mere utterance of it is sufficient, as some people incorrectly claim, this matter therefore needs to be clarified in order to dispel such misunderstandings from those who desire the truth.

Thus, concerning the hadeeth of 'Utbaan radiallaahu 'anhu which states:
"Indeed, Allaah has forbidden the Fire to whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah seeking by it the Face of Allaah."[35]

Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn 'Abdullaah, rahimahullaah, said: "And know that the apparent meaning of certain ahaadeeth is that whoever utters the two testimonies of faith, then Allaah will forbid the Fire to them; such as this one, and the hadeeth of Mu'aadh who said:
"I was riding along with the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* as a companion rider when he said to me thrice: "**0 Mu'aadh ibn Jabal!**" I replied to him thrice: Here I am, 0 Messenger of Allaah, at your service. He then said: **"There is no one who testifies to laa ilaaha illallaah muhammadur-Rasoolullaah truthfully from his heart, except that Allaah would forbid the Fire to him**." I said: 0 Allaah's Messenger, shall I not inform the people so that they may receive good news? He said: **"No, because they will depend upon this.**" However, Mu'aadh related this hadeeth just before his death, fearing that he may be sinful [i.e by concealing this knowledge]."[36]

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[35] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.425) and Muslim (no.33).
[36] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.128).

And Muslim reports from 'Ubaadah *radhiyallahu anhu*, from the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*: "**Whoever testifies to laa ilaaha illallaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, then Allaah would forbid the Fire to him**. "[37]

Then there are certain ahaadeeth that state that whoever utters the two testimonies of faith will enter the Gardens of Paradise, but they do not actually state that the person will be guarded from Hell. From [such ahaadeeth] is the hadeeth of 'Ubaadah *radhiyallahu anhu*, which has preceded, and the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah - when they were with the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* in the battle of Tabook - in which it states:

"No one who meets Allaah having testified to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, having no doubt about it, shall be barred from the Gardens of Paradise. "[38]

The best of what has been said concerning its meaning is what Shaykhul-Islaam [Ibn Taymiyyah] and others have said: That these ahaadeeth refer to whoever says it and dies upon it, since it has come with [certain] restrictions: That it should be said with sincerity from the heart, with certainty from the heart, without entertaining any doubt about it, and with truthfulness. Indeed, the reality of tawheed is the soul's total affinity and attraction to Allaah. So whoever testifies to laa ilaaha illallaah sincerely from his heart, will enter the Gardens of Paradise. This is because sincerity is actually the heart's affinity and attraction to Allaah, the Exalted, by sincerely repenting to Him from committing sins. So whoever dies upon this state will attain Paradise. There occurs in some ahaadeeth that reach the highest level of certainty and authenticity (mutawaatir), that whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah, and has in his heart faith,

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[37] Reported by Muslim (no.47).
[38] Reported by Muslim (no.45).

even if it equals the weight of a grain of barley, or the weight of a mustard seed, or even the weight of an atom - will eventually be taken out of the Hellfire. It has been related in a continuously related narration (mutawaatir) that many of those who say laa ilaaha illallaah will enter the Hellfire, but will eventually be taken out from it. It has also been related in mutawaatir form that Allaah has forbidden the Fire from devouring the traces of prostration from the children of Aadam; those that used to pray and prostrate to Allaah. It has been related in mutawaatir form that the Fire is forbidden to whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah or testifies to laa ilaaha illallaahu muhammadur-rasoolullaah. However, they occur with certain weighty restrictions. Many of those who utter it do not know what sincerity or certainty [towards it] means, and it is feared that if they do not understand this, then they may be put to trial at the time of death, whereby they are barred from it. Indeed, most of the people who are put to trial at the time of death, or in their graves, are these types of people, as pointed out in the hadeeth:

"I heard the people saying something, so I said the same." [39]

This mostly occurs from those people who blindly follow. They are the people who best fit Allaah the Most High's saying:

"Indeed we found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will surely follow in their footsteps." [Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:23]

Therefore, there is no contradiction between these ahaadeeth. Since if laa ilaaha illallaah is said with complete sincerity and certainty, there will not be - in such a state - a persistence towards sinning. Indeed, perfect sincerity and certainty necessitate that Allaah becomes more beloved to that person

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[39] Hasan: Part of a lengthy hadeeth reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.737), from Abu Hurayrah *radhiyallahu anhu*. Shaykh al-Albaanee verified its soundness in as-Saheehah (no.1391).

than everything else, and hence no desire will remain to do what Allaah has prohibited, nor will there be any dislike for what Allaah has commanded. Such is the person to whom the Fire will be prohibited, even if he committed sins previous to this. Since this faith, this sincere repentance and sincerity, and this true love and certainty, will not leave any sin with such a person, except that it will be blotted out, just as the night blots out the day." Here end the words of the Shaykh, rahimahullaah[40].

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab said: "There is another misconception that is raised. They say that the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* reprimanded Usaamah for killing a person after he had uttered laa ilaaha illallaah, and he said:
"Have you killed him after he had uttered laa ilaaha illallaah!"[41]

There are other ahaadeeth concerning withholding from one who utters the kalimah.

The intent of these ignorant ones is that whoever utters the kalimah, then it is not permissible to ever declare them to be unbelivers, nor to fight them - regardless of what they do! So to these ignorant ones it is said: It is known that Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'ala yhi wa sallam fought the jews and captured them, despite their utterance of laa ilaaha illallaah. And the Companions of Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'ala yhi wa sallam fought against Banoo Haneefah, inspite of them bearing witness to laa ilaaha illallaahu muhammadur-rasoolullaah, and despite them praying and claiming that they were Muslims.[42]

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[40] Tayseerul-Azeezul-Hameed (pp.61-62).
[41] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.4269) and Muslim (no.159).
[42] That was when Banoo Haneefah apostatized under the leadership of the false prophet, Musaylamah. The Companions fought them at the battle of Yamaamah, during the rule of Aboo

Likewise was the case of those who were burnt alive by 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib.[43] Yet these ignorant ones affirm that whoever denies the Resurrection is to be declared an unbeliever and killed, even after saying laa ilaaha illallaah. They also affirm that whoever denies any of the pillars of Islaam is to be declared an unbeliever and killed, even if he has uttered the kalimah. So how is it that [uttering the kalimah] does not benefit a person when he denies a secondary [fundamental], but will benefit a person who denies tawheed; which is the very core of the Religion that the Messengers were sent with? However, the enemies of Allaah do not understand the meaning of those ahaadeeth."[44]

And he, rahimahullaah, also said: "As for [what is to be understood from] the hadeeth of Usaamah who once killed a person who declared himself to be a Muslim, because he thought that he only did so due to fear for his life and property. Then whenever a person outwardly displays that he is a Muslim, it is obligatory to withhold from fighting him, unless it becomes absolutely clear that he has done something to oppose this [and for which Islaam requires that he be fought]. Allaah revealed about this [type of situation]:

"0 you who Believe! When you go out to fight in the Path of Allaah, verify the truth, and do not say to anyone who greets you by embracing Islaam: You are not a Believer." [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:94]

So this verse proves that it is obligatory to withhold and to verify the truth. So if after investigation it is proven that the person contradicts Islaam, then that person is to be fought,

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Bakr radiallaahu 'anhu, in the year 11H. Consult al-Kaamil (2/218-224) of Ibn al-Atheer.

[43] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.6922).

[44] Kashfush-Shubuhaat (pp.45-49)

because of Allaah's command to verify the truth. If it was the case that a person could never ever be fought, so long as he has uttered the kalimah, then the command to verify the truth would be pointless! Likewise is the case for those other ahaadeeth that we have previously mentioned, which are similar in meaning [and which state] that whoever outwardly displays Islaam and tawheed, then it is obligatory to withhold concerning him, except if it becomes clear from him that he contradicts this. The proof for this is that the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* said: "Have you killed him after he uttered laa ilaaha illallaah!"

And he said: "**I have been ordered to fight the people until they say laa ilaaha illallaah**." [45]

Yet he is the one who also said about the Khawaarij:
"If I were to meet them, then I would kill them, as the people of Aad were killed."[46]

[This was the case] even though they were the most persistent of people in uttering laa ilaaha illallaah, to the extent that even the Companions felt [that their own worship was] insignificant compared to theirs. The Khawaarij were also those who learnt knowledge from the Companions, yet their [utterance of] laa ilaaha illallaah did not benefit them, nor did their abundant worship, nor did their ascription to Islaam - since they displayed actions which were contrary to the Prescribed Law (Sharee'ah). Likewise is the case concerning fighting against the jews, and the Companions fighting against Banoo Haneefah, as we have previously mentioned."[47]

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[45] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.392) and Muslim (no.35).
[46] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.6930) and an-Nasaa'ee (no.3823).
[47] Kashfush-Shubuhaat (pp.49-51).

Al-Haafidh Ibn Rajab said in his essay entitled Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (pp.20-21), whilst commenting upon the saying of the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*: **I have been commanded to fight the people, until they testify to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, and establish the Prayer and pay the Zakaah**."[48]

He said: "That 'Umar and a group of the Companions understood [from it] that whoever pronounces the shahaadatain, would be protected from being punished in this world because of it. So they withheld from fighting against those who withheld from paying the Zakaah. However, [Abu Bakr] as-Siddeeq understood [from it] that fighting them should not be prevented, unless they fulfilled the rights of the kalimah, due to the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam's saying:
"If they do this, then their blood and their property will be protected from me, except what is a right by Islaam, and their reckoning is with Allaah."[49]

Abu Bakr said: "Zakaah is a right which is due upon wealth."[50] This understanding of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq was based upon what was clearly narrated from the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* by more than one Companion - which includes Ibn 'Umar, Anas and others - that he said:
"I have been commanded to fight the people, until they testify to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, and establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah."

This is also proven by Allaah the Most High's saying:

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[48] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.25) and Muslim (no.36), from Ibn 'Umar
[49] This is the end part of the preceding hadeeth
[50] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.1400).

"So if they repent (from their unbelief), establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah, then leave their way free." [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:5]

In a similar way, the [following] verse: **"So if they repent, establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah, then they are your brothers in the Religion."** [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:11]

… proves that the Islaamic brotherhood is not established except by fulfillment of the obligatory duties along with [the affirmation of] tawheed. Indeed, repentance from shirk can never be achieved except with the [affirmation of] tawheed. So when Abu Bakr resolved this with the Companions, they accepted his saying and saw that his view was correct. So now you know that punishment in this world is not absolutely lifted from one who merely utters the two testimonies of faith, rather he may receive punishment due to certain shortcomings in fulfilling any of the rights of Islaam. Likewise, there could [also] be punishment in the Hereafter."

Ibn Rajab also said: "A group of scholars said that what is meant by these ahaadeeth is that laa ilaaha illallaah is a cause for entering the Gardens of Paradise and being saved from the Hellfire, and that it obligates it. However, results will not come about except by the fulfillment of its conditions (shuroot) and the removal of any of its impediments (intifaa'ul-muwaani'). Consequently, rewards may be withheld due to the absence of one of its conditions, or due to the presence of one of its impediments. This is the saying of al-Hasan [al-Basree] and Wahb ibn Munabbih and it is the most prevalent view.

Al-Hasan said to al-Farazdaq, who was burying his wife: "What have you prepared for this day?" He replied: Testifying to laa ilaaha illallaah for the last seventy years. Al-Hasan said: "What wonderful preparation. However, laa ilaaha illallaah has certain conditions, so beware of defaming chaste women."

It was once said to al-Hasan: Some people think that whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah will enter the Gardens of Paradise. So he replied: Whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah, fulfils its right and obligations, will enter the Gardens of Paradise.

Wahb ibn Munabbih was once asked: Isn't laa ilaaha illallaah the key to Paradise? So he replied: "Indeed, but there is no key except that it has certain ridges and teeth. So whoever possesses that key, with those ridges and teeth, then the doors will be opened for him. If not, then it will not!"[51]. [52]

I believe that what I have quoted from the words of the people of knowledge is sufficient in dispelling the doubts of those who think that whoever utters laa ilaaha illallaah can never be declared an unbeliever, even if he does acts of great shirk which are still perpetrated today at the shrines and graves of the righteous; acts that totally and utterly oppose and contradict the kalimah laa ilaaha illallaah. This is the path taken by the deviants; those who take hold of general texts which they think are proofs for them, whilst leaving what clarifies and explains them from the detailed texts. This is similar to the state of those who believe in a part of the Book and reject other parts of the Book. Allaah said about this type of people

"It is Allaah Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are Verses that are entirely clear in meaning (al-muhkamaait), they are the foundations of the Book; and other Verses that are not so clear (almutashaabihaat). As for those in whose heart there is perversity and deviation, they follow those verses that are not so clear, seeking discord and trial and seeking for its hidden meanings. But none knows its hidden meanings except Allaah.

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[51] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/141).

[52] Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (pp.15-17).

And those who are firmly entrenched in knowledge say: We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord. And none receive admonition, except the men of understanding. [Those who say]:
Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate from the truth after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself. Indeed, You are the Bestower. Our Lord! Indeed it is You who will gather mankind on the Day about which there is no doubt. Indeed Allaah never breaks His Promise." [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:7-9].[53]

o Allaah! Show us the truth and grant us the ability to follow it; and show us the falsehood and grant us the ability to stay clear of it.

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[53] Imaam ash-Shaatibee, rahimahullaah, said in his valuable book at-I'tisaam (1/231):
"Anyone who follows the mutashaabihaat verses; twists the underlying reasons [of the verse]; gives an explanation to it not given by the Pious Predecessors (Salafus-Saalih); clings to the very weak or fabricated ahaadeeth, or uses that which is apparently a proof, for every view that agrees with his [pre-conceived] goals and intent - without finding a fundamental proof for understanding it in this manner - then this is the method of derivation which gives rise to innovations and the innovators."

THE EFFECTS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

If this kalimah is pronounced with truthfulness and sincerity and its essential requirements are acted upon, both inwardly and outwardly, then its effects upon both the individual and the society will indeed be praiseworthy.

From the most important of these effects are:

1- Having a united word which results in the Muslims acquiring strength and achieving victory over their enemies. This is because they submit to one Religion and to a single creed (‘aqeedah), as Allaah the Most High said:

“And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not become divided.” [Soorah Aal-’Imraan 3:101]

And Allaah the Most High said: **“He it is that has strengthened you with His help and with the Believers. And moreover, He has united their hearts with love and affection. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts with love and affection. However, Allaah has united them. Indeed Allaah is the All-Mighty, All-Wise.**” [Soorah al-Anfaal 8:62-63]

And differing in the creed is a cause for divisions, disputes and hostility - as Allaah the Exalted said: **“Indeed those who split up their religion and become sects, you have no concern with them in the least.”** [Soorah al-An’aam 6:159]

And Allaah the Most High said: **“But people have cut off their affair of unity between themselves, into sects; each party rejoices in that which is with itself.”** [Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:53]

So people cannot be united except upon a common creed of faith (eemaan) and tawheed; which is the implication of laa ilaaha illallaah - and this can be seen in the condition of the Arabs before and after Islaam.

2 - The prevalence of peace and tranquility in a society that professes tawheed and submits to the requirements of laa ilaaha illallaah. This is because every individual will take only that which Allaah has made lawful and leave that which He has prohibited, doing so in response with what the kalimah requires of him. So he will refrain from aggression, injustice and transgression and in its place will be co-operation, love and allegiance for the sake of Allaah; acting upon Allaah, the Most High's, saying: **"Indeed the Believers are but brothers."** [Soorah alHujuraat 4 9:10]

This is clearly reflected in the condition of the Arabs before they submitted to this kalimah, and after they submitted to it. Before they submitted to it they used to be enemies, slaughtering one another, boasting about killing, looting and plundering. But when they submitted to it, they became brothers who had mutual love for one another. Allaah the Exalted said:
"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah; and those with him are harsh against the unbelievers, but kind and merciful to each other." [Soorah al-Fath 48:29]

And Allaah the Most High said:
"And remember the favor of Allaah upon you, for you were once enemies to one another but He joined your hearts together in love, so that by His Grace you became brothers." [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:103]

3 - **Achieving authority and succession of rule (khilaafah) upon the earth**, and [maintaining] purity of the Religion and firmness against the various destructive thoughts and ideologies; just as Allaah, the Exalted, said:

"Allaah has promised those amongst you who truly believe and act in obedience to Allaah and His Messenger, that He will grant them rulership upon the earth, just as He granted it to those before them, and that He will establish their Religion for them and grant them the authority to practice the Religion which He chose and ordered for them. And He will certainly change their situation to one of security, after their fear, providing they worship Me, obey Me, and do not associate anything else in worship with Me." [Soorah an-Noor 24:55]

So Allaah has firmly tied the achievement of these lofty goals and objectives with worshipping Him alone and not worshipping others along with Him. And this is the meaning and requirement of laa illaaha illallaah.

4 - **Achieving peace and tranquility of the soul, as well as mental and psychological relief** for whoever says laa ilaaha illallaah and acts by its requirements. This is because such a person is a slave and worshipper of only one Lord. He knows what his Lord wants and what pleases Him, so he does it. Likewise, he knows what angers Him, so he abstains from it. This is contrary to one who worships and is enslaved by many deities, each one desiring from him what the other does not desire, and each one planning and arranging for him something different to what the others plan and arrange. Allaah, the Most High, said:

"Are many different lords and deities better or Allaah, the One, the Irresistible?" [Soorah Yoosuf 12:39]

And Allaah the Most High said: **"Allaah puts forth a similitude: a slave belonging to many partners who dispute and argue with one another and a slave who belongs entirely to one master. Are the two equal in comparison?"** [Soorah az-Zumar 39:29]

Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim remarked: "This similitude that Allaah the Most Perfect strikes is like that of one who worships others besides Allaah (mushrik) and one who worships only Allaah (muwahhid). So the example of a mushrik is like a slave who is owned by a group [of masters] who constantly dispute, argue and show enmity towards each other; so the person becomes ill-natured. Thus, since the mushrik is one who worships different deities, he is likened to a slave who is owned by a group of masters who compete with one another to employ his service and obedience. It is therefore not possible for him to appease all of them!

On the other hand, the example of a muwahhid who worships Allaah alone is like a slave who has just one master to whom he submits. The slave knows the master's intent and knows also the ways to please him. Thus he is relieved of all the feuds and confusion [that are bound to arise if he has more than one master]. Rather, he is safe from his master, with no dispute over who he should serve and obey, with the fact that the master shows clemency, mercy and kindness to him, does good to him, and looks after his best interests. So are the two slaves alike?"[54]

5 - Acquiring dignity and eminence, both in this world and in the Hereafter, for the people of laa ilaaha illallaah. Allaah the Most High said:

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[54] I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een (1/187).

"Worshipping none but Allaah alone; not ascribing any partner in the worship of Him. And whoever commits shirk with Allaah, it is as if he had plummeted from the sky and the birds had snatched him, or the winds had hurled him to a far off place." [Soorah al-Hajj 22:31]

So this Verse proves that tawheed is loftiness and ascendancy, whereas shirk is lowliness and ignominy.

The great scholar, Ibn al-Qayyim, rahimahullaah, said: "Allaah likened the loftiness, expanse and nobility of faith and tawheed to that of the heavens, which are its place of ascent and descent. From it faith and tawheed descend to the earth and to it they ascend. Abandoning faith and tawheed has been likened to plummeting from the heavens to the lowest of the lowly places with regards to the severe constriction [of the heart] and the ever-accumulating pain. The birds that snatch at his limbs and completely severs them are a similitude of the Shaytaan whom Allaah sends to drive him towards evil, to harass him and to steer him to the place of his destruction. The wind that hurls him to a far off place is his false desires which cause him to cast his soul into the most despicable of places, furthest away from the heavens."[55]

6 - Safeguarding one's blood, property and honors; due to the Prophet's saying *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*:

"I have been ordered to fight mankind until they say laa ilaaha illallaah. So if they say it, then their blood and their wealth will be protected, except if they fail to fulfill its right, and their reckoning is with Allaah."[56]

What is meant by except if they fail to fulfill its right is: If they say it, but refuse to fulfill its obligations - which implies not

[55] I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een (1/180).
[56] Reported by al-Bukhaaree (13/419).

fulfilling what it requires as regards singling-out Allaah alone with worship and staying clear of worshipping others besides Allaah, and establishing the pillars of Islaam - then their property and blood will not be safeguarded. Rather, they will be fought and their property will be confiscated and given to the Muslims as war booty, which is what the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* and his successors did.

We thus conclude that this kalimah has tremendous effects upon both the individual and the society, whether in matters of worship, social transactions, or morals and manners. And with Allaah lies all success. And may Allaah extol and send blessings of peace upon our Prophet Muhammad; and upon his Family and Companions and his followers.